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Digital Transformation in Islamic Education: Integrating Technology to Strengthen Noble Character in Students in the Modern Era

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Abstract (10 pt)
Penelitian ini menjawab celah (gap) dalam transformasi digital: ketidakselarasan antara penggunaan teknologi digital dalam pembelajaran dengan tujuan utama pendidikan Islam—yaitu pembentukan akhlak mulia pada peserta didik. Pertanyaan penelitian dalam studi ini adalah: 1) Bagaimana transformasi digital dalam pendidikan Islam dapat diintegrasikan dengan teknologi pembelajaran untuk memperkuat akhlak mulia peserta didik? 2) Apa saja strategi efektif dalam memanfaatkan teknologi digital untuk memperkuat akhlak mulia peserta didik? Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis transformasi digital dalam pendidikan Islam dalam konteks penguatan akhlak mulia peserta didik serta merumuskan strategi efektif dalam memanfaatkan teknologi digital untuk mencapai tujuan tersebut. Pendekatan kualitatif digunakan melalui metode Systematic Literature Review (SLR), yang melibatkan pencarian dan analisis kritis terhadap artikel ilmiah bereputasi, buku, dan materi lain yang relevan dengan pertanyaan penelitian. Data yang terkumpul melalui proses reduksi, penyaringan, dan analisis isi (content analysis), yang kemudian dilanjutkan dengan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa: 1) transformasi teknologi digital dalam pendidikan Islam dapat diintegrasikan melalui lima pilar—pedagogi Islam, literasi digital Islami, etika digital, kompetensi guru, dan budaya sekolah digital; serta 2) terdapat enam strategi efektif untuk integrasi ini: kurikulum digital berbasis karakter, peningkatan kompetensi guru, penerapan pedagogi Islam, literasi digital Islami, budaya digital yang beretika, dan evaluasi pembelajaran yang mencakup aspek kognitif, afektif, maupun perilaku. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa keberhasilan transformasi digital dalam pendidikan Islam tidak hanya ditentukan oleh kemahiran teknologi, melainkan juga oleh kemampuan mengintegrasikan teknologi dengan nilai-nilai moral sebagai landasan untuk membentuk karakter peserta didik yang beriman, berintegritas, dan bertanggung jawab.

Keywords: Transformasi Digital, Pendidikan Islam, Akhlak Mulia, Literasi Digital Islami

Abstract
This study addresses a gap in digital transformation: the disconnect between the use of digital technology in learning and the primary goal of Islamic education namely, the cultivation of noble character in students. The research questions are: 1) How can digital transformation in Islamic education be integrated with learning technology to reinforce students' noble character? 2) What are the effective strategies for utilizing digital technology to strengthen students' noble character? The study aims to analyze digital transformation in Islamic education in the context of reinforcing students' noble character and to formulate effective strategies for leveraging digital technology to that end. A qualitative approach is employed, specifically a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method, involving the search for and critical analysis of reputable scholarly articles, books, and other materials relevant to the research questions. The collected data underwent reduction, filtering, and content analysis, followed by the formulation of conclusions. The research findings indicate that: 1) the digital technology transformation in Islamic education can be integrated through five pillars Islamic pedagogy, Islamic digital literacy, digital ethics, teacher competence, and a digital school culture; and 2) there are six effective strategies for this integration: a character-based digital curriculum, enhancement of teacher competence, implementation of Islamic pedagogy, Islamic

digital literacy, an ethical digital culture, and the evaluation of learning across cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects. The study concludes that the success of digital transformation in Islamic education is determined not merely by technological proficiency, but also by the ability to integrate technology with moral values as the foundation for shaping the character of students who are faithful, possess integrity, and are responsible

***Keywords**: Digital Transformation, Islamic Education, Noble Character, Islamic Digital Literacy*

1. Introduction

The rapid trend of digitalization in Islamic education driving a swift shift in the 21st-century learning landscape has created a stark contrast between technological efficiency and the risk of moral erosion, thereby generating an urgent need to reinforce students' noble character in the modern era. The migration of learning environments from physical spaces to cyberspace has fundamentally altered students' patterns of socio-religious interaction. The rampant spread of digital content, lacking robust ethical filtering, has led to spiritual alienation and a shift in value orientation from pious character to mere popularity. This reality is evidenced by the prevalence of cyberbullying, hate speech, gaming addiction, and a decline in respect for educators within Islamic educational institutions (Affandi & Rahmanto, 2025; Hosna et al., 2026). Consequently, these social facts underscore that strengthening noble character through technology integration is an urgent necessity that can no longer be avoided or postponed.

The massive volume of scholarly studies on the digitalization of Islamic education which has brought about methodological shifts has highlighted epistemological disparities regarding the limitations of previous research, creating an urgent need to critically map the literature gap. Most existing studies tend to focus on administrative effectiveness, technical infrastructure mastery, and the partial adoption of e-learning platforms. As a result, there is a scarcity of research that holistically integrates learning technology innovations with the internalization of noble character grounded in Islamic epistemology. Most prior studies treat technology merely as a neutral instrument, failing to incorporate a systematic ethical-spiritual framework (ta'dīb) into curriculum design and digital pedagogy (Mintasih et al., 2024; Affandi & Rahmanto 2025). This literature gap highlights the urgent need for new studies capable of synthesizing the dimensions of technology, Islamic pedagogy, and noble character assessment in an integrated manner.

The rapid pace of technological disruption driving the need for systemic change in Islamic education has led to divergent views regarding the appropriate direction of digital transformation, highlighting an urgent need to establish focused and measurable study objectives. Broadly, this study aims to bridge an academic gap by analyzing the framework for integrating digital technology to strengthen students' noble character in the modern era. Specifically, the research is designed to identify five pillars of digital technology integration and formulate six operational strategies to maximize the use of technology for character education. These objectives encompass digital curriculum reconstruction, I-TPACK-based teacher competency enhancement, the implementation of interactive Islamic pedagogy, the cultivation of Islamic digital literacy, the maintenance of an ethical school culture, and holistic learning evaluation (Rahman et al. 2026, and Summary of the Proceeding Article, 2025). Based on this formulation, the study is expected to make significant theoretical and practical contributions to the development of an adaptive Islamic education model for the modern era.

Amidst the massive digital transformation bringing profound changes to madrasa culture, sharp disagreements have emerged regarding the view that technology triggers secularization, thereby creating an urgent need to reinforce this study's central argument. The study posits that digital technology does not constitute a moral threat but rather serves as an effective means (wasīlah) when organically integrated with moral values as the ultimate goal (ghāyah). The combination of the five pillars and six operational strategies is believed capable of transforming the learning paradigm from mere knowledge transfer (ta'līm) into the purification of the soul and the cultivation of proper conduct (ta'dīb). This rationale is supported by empirical evidence showing that technology-based learning grounded in Islamic ethics, teacher role-modeling (uswah ḥasanah in the digital realm), and authentic assessment can foster students' moral resilience (digital resilience) (Zuhri et al. 2026; Affandi and Rahmanto 2025). Therefore, the integration of digital transformation innovation and the internalization of noble character is the key to realizing an insān kāmil (perfect human) profile that is adaptable in the modern era..

2. Method

The growing trend of digitalization in Islamic education, which is reshaping the modern pedagogical landscape, has given rise to an epistemological tension between the erosion of moral values and technological efficiency; this creates a critical need to establish a unit of analysis focused on integrating technology to reinforce students' noble character. The study focuses on the concepts, models, and practices of digital technology integration—such as Learning Management Systems (LMS), AI-based learning applications, and interactive digital media—within the process of internalizing noble character values (ta'dib) (Affandi & Rahmanto, 2025; Abdullah 2024). The academic rationale for this focus is that digital transformation in Islamic educational institutions must not merely prioritize knowledge transfer (ta'lim) or administrative digitalization; rather, it must address the ontological dimension of cultivating noble character (Affandi & Rahmanto, 2025). Operationally, the unit of analysis is identified through three steps: first, mapping the concepts of technology integration and moral values within Islamic educational literature; second, focusing on the pedagogical strategies of educators acting as digital uswah hasanah (exemplary digital role models) in shaping student character; and third, examining student interaction dynamics in digital spaces to formulate an adaptive framework for integrating noble character in the modern era (Hosna et al., 2026).

The accelerating trend of cyber-pedagogy which drives shifts in educational interaction patterns raises questions regarding methodological validity when measuring spiritual values in virtual settings; this underscores the necessity of employing a qualitative design based on a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) and critical library research. Consequently, this study utilizes a qualitative approach incorporating an SLR method based on PRISMA protocols alongside critical literature analysis (Rahman et al., 2026; Creswell & Creswell 2018). A qualitative Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach was selected for its academic suitability in capturing the complex, non-linear socio-cultural and religious dynamics within the digital space, as well as for its ability to synthesize cross-contextual empirical findings to address research gaps without the constraints of narrow geographical boundaries (Firdaus et al. 2025; Turmidzi et al., 2026). The implementation of this method involves three steps: first, formulating key research questions regarding the integration of technology and the strengthening of moral character; second, systematically mapping and screening existing

literature; and third, thematically categorizing findings to reconstruct a holistic and validated conceptual framework.

The rapid trend of digital information transparency, which is driving changes in Generation Z's religious literature search behavior, has given rise to controversies over the authenticity of scientific authority, thus raising the urgent need to rigorously select reputable primary data sources from internationally indexed journals and official policy documents. The primary data sources in this study consist of reputable international and nationally qualified scientific articles indexed in the Scopus, Web of Science, SINTA, and DOAJ databases published between 2020 and 2026, as well as Islamic Religious Education curriculum policy documents (Wastuti et al., 2025; Rahman et al., 2026). The selection of these primary data sources is based on the academic consideration that reputable scientific publications provide methodologically tested scientific evidence and represent the latest developments in academic discourse (Firdaus et al., 2025). The utilization of primary sources was carried out in three stages: First, collecting research articles from reputable journals that meet the inclusion criteria for the themes of digital transformation and morality. Second, collecting Islamic education policy documents and curriculum standards. Third, rigorously qualify the methodological credibility of each document before extraction.

The spirit of technological disruption, which has brought radical changes to the accessibility of scientific data, has revealed a difference in effectiveness between digital data extraction and conventional field research, prompting the urgent need to implement data collection techniques based on the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) protocol. Data collection techniques are implemented through digital documentation studies and structured desk reviews following the PRISMA process (Rahman et al., 2026; Page et al., 2021). The use of this data collection technique is academically sound because it allows for the transparent, accountable, and reproducible extraction of narrative and conceptual data from thousands of scientific documents distributed across various academic search engines (Turmidzi et al., 2026). Data collection is carried out through three operational stages: First, applying a combination of keywords (Boolean operators) such as "digital transformation," "Islamic education," "technology integration," and "noble character" to the search database. Second, title/ abstract screening and full-text eligibility assessment based on inclusion-exclusion criteria. Third, documenting selected articles in a structured data extraction matrix.

The growing trend of qualitative data analysis, coupled with the shift in digital narrative structures, has led to differences in the adequacy of surface interpretations, creating a critical urgency for operationalizing content analysis and interactive thematic analysis techniques modeled after Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña. The data analysis technique used is a combination of content analysis and qualitative thematic analysis1 (Miles et.al, 2019; Qomaruddin and Sa'diyah 2024). This analytical technique was chosen because it can systematically uncover deep meanings, thematic patterns, and complex conceptual relationships behind digital narrative texts (Firdaus et al. 2025). The data analysis stages were carried out systematically through three interactive stages: First, data condensation, which involves sorting, simplifying, and focusing data relevant to the theme of integrating technology and noble morals. Second, data display, which involves organizing findings into a thematic matrix and systematic analytical description. Third, drawing conclusions and verification (conclusion drawing/verification), namely formulating a conceptual synthesis and

testing the validity of the findings through triangulation of theory and cross-context references.

3. Results and Discussion

It is important to understand that the digital transformation in Islamic education should not be interpreted simply as technocratic acceleration or modernization of learning instruments (wasīlah), but rather an ontological and epistemological reconstruction that places the strengthening of good morals as the main source (ghāyah) (Wastuti et al., 2025). The results of this study indicate two fundamental findings: first, the integration of highly effective digital technology in Islamic education is supported by five main pillars: Islamic pedagogy, Islamic digital literacy, digital ethics, teacher competence, and a school culture based on Islamic values. Second, the strategy for utilizing this technology to strengthen student morality requires six comprehensive operational strategies, including the integration of moral values into the digital curriculum, improving teacher competence, implementing interactive Islamic pedagogy, cultivating Islamic digital literacy, maintaining an ethical school culture, and comprehensive learning evaluation; cognitive, affective, and behavioral. The alignment of these five pillars and six strategies shifts the learning paradigm from merely transferring knowledge (ta'līm) to purifying the soul and developing morals (ta'dīb and tazkiyat al-nafs) that are relevant and adaptive to the disruptions of the Society 5.0 era. The detailed explanation is as follows.

a. Digital Transformation in Islamic Education Can Be Integrated with Learning Technology to Strengthen Students' Noble Morals

It is important to understand that the findings of digital transformation, in this case, have five pillars, which can be explained as follows:

The first pillar, Islamic pedagogy, serves as a philosophical foundation that guides the use of digital technology to maintain its alignment with the prophetic worldview and revealed values (Firdaus et al., 2025). In the digital learning space, Islamic pedagogy transforms conventional methods into emancipatory and contemplative interactions through dialogical learning, problem-based learning, and project-based learning approaches based on the Qur'an (Turmudzi et al., 2026). The use of media such as Learning Management Systems (LMS) and artificial intelligence (AI) is designed not to replace spiritual reflection, but rather to strengthen the contemplation of the verses of kaunīyyah and qaulīyyah (Zakariyah et.al., 2025). Therefore, technology serves as a means of thinking that connects academic material with divine awareness (tawhid), so that the teaching and learning process retains deep spiritual value amidst the flow of digital automation.

The second pillar, Islamic digital literacy, expands the scope of technical literacy to critical-religious skills that equip students to face the digital information overload (Kandiri et al., 2026). Islamic digital literacy evaluates information based on the principles of tabayyun (scientific and objective verification), sidq (data honesty), and amanah (intellectual responsibility) to confront and counter the dangers of disinformation, slander, and radicalism in cyberspace (Kandiri et al., 2026; Rahman et al., 2026). Through this literacy, students are not merely passive consumers of information, but active agents who filter content and create religious discourse that brings benefits (maslahah) (Sodikin et al. 2026). Strengthening digital literacy based on Islamic values ensures the connection of Islamic scholarly traditions (sanad) with the

flexibility of modern media without losing the authenticity of religious authority and noble morals.

The third pillar, digital ethics (ādāb al-iftirādiyyah), acts as a moral compass for students as they interact within the anonymous and limitless ecosystem of cyberspace (Kurniawan and Annisah 2025). Islamic digital ethics instills a sense of muraqabah the feeling of constant supervision by Allah SWT so that students avoid reprehensible behavior such as cyberbullying, hate speech (namīmah), copyright theft, and the dissemination of immoral and negative content (Turmudzi et al., 2026). This ethical habituation transforms digital activities into a form of worship and fosters digital piety (Affandi and Rahmanto 2025). By internalizing digital ethics, students are able to express the characteristics of wasatiyyah (moderation) and politeness (al-hayā') in every post, comment, and interaction on social media.

The fourth pillar, teacher competence. Demands a shift in the role of teachers from mere instructors (mu'allim) to digital spiritual guides (digital murabbī) who master Islamic Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (I-TPACK) (Diana and Rahman 2025; Wastuti et al., 2025). The I-TPACK concept integrates technological knowledge, pedagogy, and religious materials, enhanced by the Sharia Congruence Knowledge (SCK) dimension, to ensure all digital media aligns with sharia (Rahman et al., 2026). In the digital era, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers must be present as digital role models who exemplify integrity, civility, and wisdom in using technological devices both inside and outside the classroom (Diana and Rahman, 2025). The presence of these exemplary figures prevents a crisis of role models that often triggers moral alienation in students due to the dominance of popular figures on social media.

The fifth pillar, a school culture based on Islamic values (bī'ah islāmiyyah), creates a conducive environment that integrates physical, social, and digital conditioning (Afriani et al., 2026). An Islamic school culture not only restricts access to negative content through school regulations but also builds an ecosystem that fosters the values of Salam (Salam), Sapa (Greeting), Senyum (Smiling), Pan (Politeness), and Politeness (5S) both in the physical classroom and digital communication groups (Saputra et al., 2026). The combination of school policies, a culture of exemplary behavior among school residents, and the creation of a culture of peace consistently and sustainably strengthens the internalization of noble morals (Zuhri et al., 2026). This conditioned environment minimizes the value gap between school life and the realities of the digital world faced by students.

b. Effective Strategies for Utilizing Digital Technology to Strengthen Students' Noble Morals

Following the five pillars mentioned above, there are several effective strategies for utilizing digital technology to strengthen students' noble morals. These are explained as follows:

The first strategy is integrating moral values into the digital curriculum. In other words, this first strategy is demonstrated through the reconstruction and integration of moral values into the digital curriculum in an organic and systematic manner (Firdaus et al. 2025). The digital Islamic Religious Education curriculum no longer presents moral material solely in a theoretical-normative manner, but rather internalizes and articulates it into learning outcomes, interactive modules, and ethical

checkpoints in each lesson plan (Firdaus et al. 2025). Framework-based curriculum development, such as Muhsin Sejati or the Integrative Digital Islamic Education Model (MPIDI), combines cognitive taxonomy with strengthening the affective-spiritual dimension (Affandi and Rahmanto 2025). Through this strategy, every IT-based learning activity such as creating Islamic religious content, analyzing digital moral cases, and completing collaborative assignments directly trains students' moral reasoning and ethical awareness (Lisnawati et al. 2026).

The second strategy is improving teacher competency. Continuously improving teacher competency focuses on providing training in cyber-pedagogy and Islamic-inspired technological literacy (Diana and Rahman 2025; Hosna et al., 2026). Islamic educational institutions must facilitate teacher professional development programs that encompass mastery of interactive media creation, LMS management, digital action research, and artificial intelligence ethics (AI ethics) (Mintasih et al., 2024). This capacity building transforms technical barriers and risks of technological sophistication into meaningful pedagogical opportunities (Hosna et al., 2026). Adaptively trained Islamic Religious Education teachers are able to design relevant learning experiences for Generation Z and Alpha without diminishing or diminishing the spiritual depth and authority of Islamic scholarship.

The third strategy is the implementation of interactive Islamic pedagogy. Improving the operational implementation of interactive Islamic pedagogy through the use of modern learning models such as the flipped classroom, blended learning, and gamification, inspired by the maqāsid al-sharī'ah (the principles of Islamic law) (Rahman et al., 2026; Zakariyah et al., 2025). According to Zakariyah et al. (2025), in the flipped classroom or blended learning model, students independently study religious theory and material through e-modules or animated videos at home, thus optimizing face-to-face class time for reflective discussions, moral simulations, and problem-solving (bahts al-masā'il). The use of interactive platforms such as Quizizz or game-based learning applications has been shown to increase learning motivation while internalizing the character of honesty, discipline, and respect for rules (Saputra et al., 2026). This contextual education connects abstract religious doctrines with students' real-life experiences in the digital ecosystem.

The fourth strategy is the habituation of Islamic digital literacy. This can be realized through the establishment of a structured and measurable Islamic digital literacy program in educational institutions (Kandiri et al., 2026). Concrete examples of this strategy include digital literacy initiatives such as the "One Hour with Books" program or news verification clinics that train students to analyze the validity of legal sources and digital fatwas. These programs teach the naqdan (information criticism) methodology and familiarize students with comparing various classical reference books (turāths) with digital articles (Sodikin et al., 2026). Programmed Islamic digital literacy fosters digital resilience, preventing students from being easily swayed by hoaxes, media provocation, and extremist narratives (Hosna et al., 2026).

The fifth strategy is maintaining an ethical school culture. This emphasizes the importance of establishing an ethical digital culture through strengthening synergy between schools, families, and communities (Tri Pusat Pendidikan) (Putra et al., 2025). The strengthening and formation of noble morals in schools will be vulnerable or even collapse if not supported by ethical guidance and supervision from parents at home

(Kurniawan and Annisah 2025). Therefore, schools provide interactive digital communication channels (such as WhatsApp groups or madrasah information portals) that are useful for balancing the target of student character formation between teachers and parents within the Digital-Mediated Character Formation (DMCF) framework. Solid and planned collaboration within this mesosystem ensures the continuity of moral messages and consistent monitoring of today's children's digital media habits.

The sixth strategy is comprehensive learning evaluation: cognitive, affective, and behavioral. The key to the effectiveness of digital transformation is the implementation of a holistic learning evaluation system that measures cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects in a balanced manner (Lisnawati et al., 2026). Digital Islamic Education (PAI) evaluation should not be limited to cognitive tests aimed solely at obtaining quantitative scores, but must also integrate affective assessment rubrics with authentic student character assessments. The use of digital evaluation instruments based on self-assessment, peer-assessment, reflection journals (murāqabah), and portfolios of proven, concrete behaviors can record the development of students' attitudes of honesty, sincerity, and discipline (Turmudzi et al., 2026). This comprehensive and holistic evaluation ensures and maximizes the overall process of digital transformation in Islamic education, leading to the realization of a perfect human being who excels intellectually, digitally, and is graceful in morals.

4. Conclusion

This study concludes that the success of digital transformation in Islamic education is determined not only by the rapid advancement of technology and infrastructure modernization (wasīlah), but also by the extent to which this technology is organically linked to noble moral values as the primary source (ghāyah). The research findings provide valid information that the internalization of noble moral values is effectively realized through the strengthening of five main pillars Islamic pedagogy, Islamic digital literacy, digital ethics (ādāb al-iftirād{i}yyah), teacher competencies based on Islamic Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (I-TPACK), and a school culture based on Islamic values (bī'ah islāmiyyah). The combination of these five pillars is implemented through six holistic strategies that include integrating moral values into the digital curriculum, increasing teacher capacity, implementing interactive pedagogy (flipped classroom and gamification), a programmed digital literacy movement, collaboration within the Tri Pusat Pendidikan ecosystem, and an authentic affective-behavioral evaluation system. This adjustment has fundamentally shifted the paradigm of Islamic education from merely transferring knowledge (ta'līm) to fostering morality and purifying the soul (ta'dīb and tazkiyat al-nafs) that are relevant and adaptive to the dynamics of the Society 5.0 era.

Academically, this study makes a significant theoretical contribution by reconstructing the cyber-pedagogy paradigm, which has tended to be positivistic and instrumental, into a humanistic and transformative Islamic pedagogical framework. The novelty of this study lies in the formulation of a conceptual synthesis that unites five pillars of integration and six operational strategies into a single integrated digital education framework such as the I-TPACK concept and the Integrative Digital Islamic Education Model (MPIDI) which positions Sharia Congruence Knowledge as the primary filter in the use of artificial intelligence (AI) and digital media. This study enriches the international discourse on Islamic education by demonstrating that technological modernization does not have to erode the authenticity of

scholarly traditions (sanad) or the moral authority of educators (digital uswah hasanah). Instead, it can expand the reach of da'wah and strengthen students' digital piety.

While this study produces a comprehensive conceptual synthesis, it has limitations due to its focus on systematic literature analysis and a qualitative-descriptive approach. Therefore, it does not empirically and longitudinally measure the quantitative impact of implementing the five pillars and six strategies on long-term changes in students' moral behavior. Therefore, future research is recommended to employ a mixed-methods approach, experimental studies, or cross-regional comparative analysis to test the effectiveness of this model at various levels of madrasa and Islamic boarding schools with diverse sociological characteristics. In practical and policy terms, this study recommends that policymakers and managers of Islamic educational institutions revise the digital Islamic Education curriculum standards, conduct cyber-pedagogy training for educators on an ongoing basis, provide equitable technological infrastructure, and strengthen digital synergy between schools and parents (Digital-Mediated Character Formation) in order to create a consistent character-building ecosystem.

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